

## CLAIMS

1. A method of imprint identification, comprising:
  - obtaining, with a predetermined reproduction ratio, an image from an imprint produced by an article; and
  - recording the co-ordinates of identification features present in the image; characterised by
  - calculating the distances between such co-ordinates;
  - storing a record of the distances thereby obtained in a database containing a number of similar records; and
  - comparing the distance information of the stored records to identify records likely to have been derived from the same article.
2. A method of imprint identification according to Claim 1, in which the records are retrieved from the database using search parameters which cover a plurality of defined distance bands.
3. A method of imprint identification according to Claim 2, in which the records are displayed on separate rows of a table with the distances arranged in columns
4. A method of imprint identification according to Claim 3, in which the distances are displayed in numerical order (ascending or descending).
5. A method of imprint identification according to Claim 3, in which distances which fall within the search parameters are visually

distinguished.

6. A method of imprint identification according to Claim 1, in which the database includes downloadable images of the imprints.

7. A method of imprint identification according to Claim 1, in which the database contains the co-ordinates of the identification features from which the distance information is derived.

8. A method of imprint identification according to Claim 1, in which the database contains a further group of records containing distance information obtained directly from articles.

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